

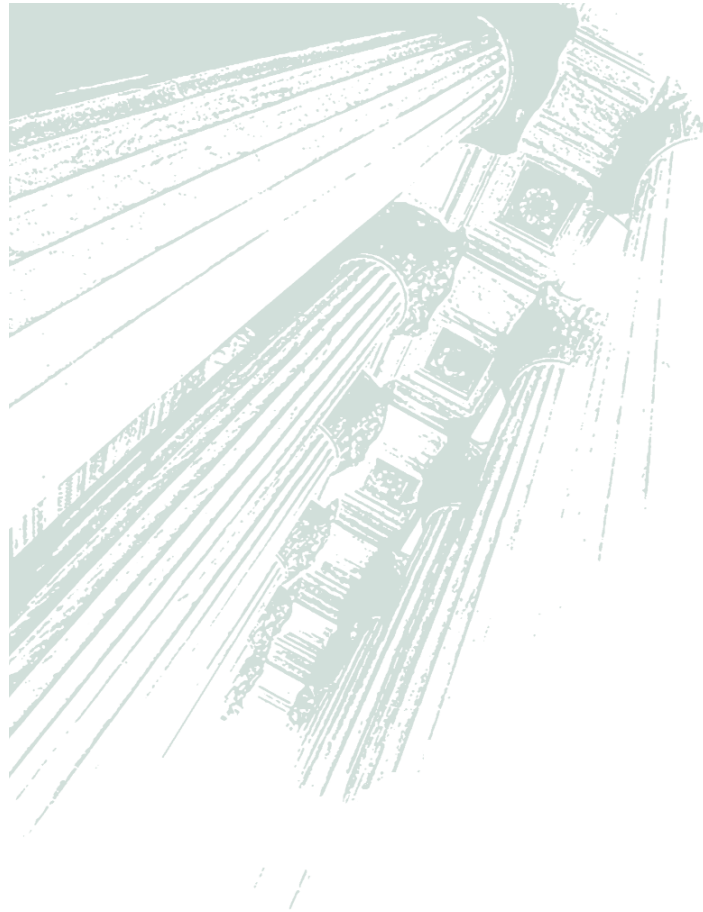


Planning America's Capital

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

2009-2014
STRATEGIC PLAN

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NATIONAL CAPITAL
PLANNING COMMISSION

2009-2014

STRATEGIC PLAN

Our Guiding Principles

We are committed to these principles, which guide us in the fulfillment of NCPC's mission.

Public Service

We serve the citizens of Washington, D.C., the National Capital Region. We are results-oriented public servants, dedicated to meeting the immediate and long-term needs of the federal establishment.

Stewardship

We protect the integrity of the national capital's built and natural environments and serve as guardians of Washington's extraordinary design, culture, and historic legacy to ensure their conservation for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

Leadership

We lead by example, educating and informing all citizens about the importance of planning in the nation's capital. We maintain the highest level of expertise in our professional fields, and we employ best practices and cutting-edge technologies. We foster partnerships and coalitions among federal and local agencies, professional and civic organizations, and members of the public to achieve shared implementation goals.

Inclusiveness

We accept, value, and embrace all people in our communities. To foster inclusiveness, we promote the free exchange of ideas and opinions and the fair and equitable treatment of all. We believe there is strength in diversity and we recognize, respect, and appreciate differences in motivations, values, and aspirations.

Excellence

We continually seek improvement through sustained commitment to quality, increased effectiveness and efficiency, and dedication to the public and the betterment of the nation's capital.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Commission Members

John V. Cogbill, III, Chairman, Presidential Appointee

Herbert F. Ames, Presidential Appointee

Jose´ L. Galvez, III, Presidential Appointee

Arrington Dixon, Mayoral Appointee

Stacie S. Turner, Mayoral Appointee

The Honorable Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense

The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne
Secretary of the Interior

The Honorable David L. Bibb
Administrator of General Services

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Chairman, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

The Honorable Adrian M. Fenty
Mayor of the District of Columbia

The Honorable Vincent C. Gray
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

Executive Director
Marcel C. Acosta



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Federal Planning in the Nation's Capital

As a capital city, Washington, D.C. is the seat of our federal government, but it is much more than a concentration of government employees and public buildings. Washington, D.C. is the symbolic heart of the nation, and its image resonates well beyond the National Capital Region and our national borders. Through its architecture and physical design, the capital city symbolizes our ideals and values, and its visibility makes it a standard-bearer for best practices in transportation, historic preservation, open space management, and sustainable growth.

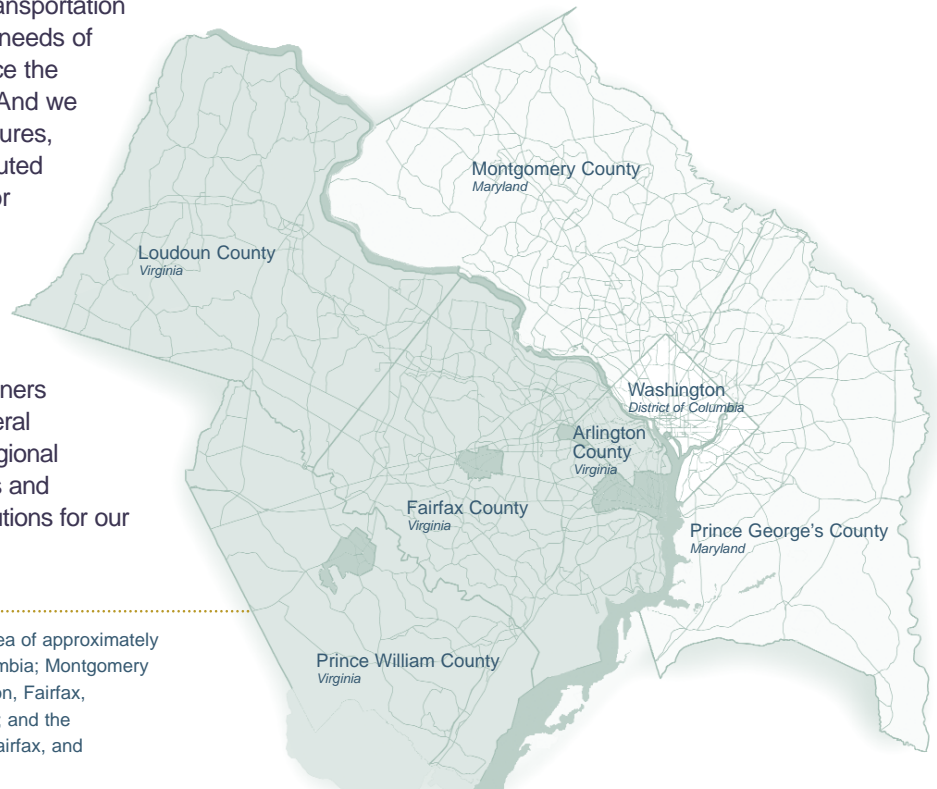
Perhaps in no other country is the idea that the capital city belongs to the entire nation so firmly rooted in its collective psyche. Millions travel to Washington each year to learn about the country's history, experience its culture, and make a mark on the political system, not just in the corridors of power, but in the city's majestic public spaces.

At the same time, the capital city and the surrounding area must serve the needs of its residents and support the activities of the federal government, which has its own interest, separate and distinct from those of the local authorities. With over 300,000 civilian and military employees and spending that accounts for 21% of the gross regional product, the federal establishment is complex, and accommodating its needs requires forethought and coordination.

The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), through planning, policymaking, and plan review, defines and protects the federal government's interest in the development of the National Capital Region. The federal interest is broad and multifaceted—from ensuring that government agencies have adequate facilities and their employees have good workplaces, to protecting the environment, public parks, and the region's historical and cultural resources. We encourage efficient transportation and smart growth, accommodate the needs of foreign missions, and strive to enhance the experience of the capital for visitors. And we safeguard the city's urban design features, both old and new, which have contributed to the identity of our nation's capital for over 200 years.

No other entity has a sufficiently broad perspective to define and protect the federal interest in the National Capital Region. NCPC's planners weigh the needs of many different federal agencies, the concerns of local and regional authorities, and the opinions of citizens and stakeholders to devise the optimal solutions for our nation's capital.

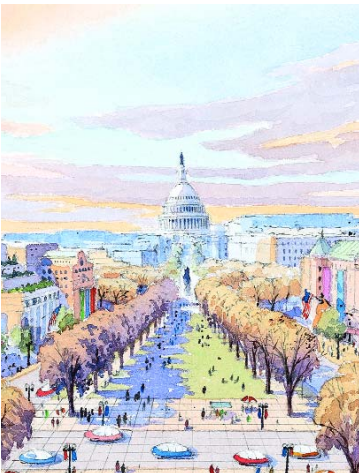
The National Capital Region encompasses an area of approximately 2,500 square miles, including the District of Columbia; Montgomery and Prince George's County in Maryland; Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties in Virginia; and the incorporated cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, Fairfax, and Manassas that lie within this geographic area.



From Our Legacy...



The National Capital Planning Commission is the inheritor of a 200-year legacy of planning



Since 1791, when Pierre L'Enfant set out to create a "magnificent city, worthy of the nation, free of its colonial origins, and bold in its assertion of a new identity," our nation's capital has been a planned city. This fact alone is one of Washington, D.C.'s defining characteristics, and the National Capital Planning Commission, as the federal government's planning agency for the capital and the surrounding region, has inherited this 200-year legacy of planning.

L'Enfant's design--with its broad avenues, commanding views, and neighborhoods centered around public parks and squares--remains the foundation of the modern city, but for the first hundred years of its existence, Washington, D.C.'s development proceeded unevenly. This prompted the 1901 formation of the Senate Park Commission, under the chairmanship of James McMillan, to restore the grandeur of L'Enfant's vision to the capital. The McMillan Plan made a distinctive imprint that endures today in the city's architecture and public spaces, particularly in the open greenway of the National Mall, the monumental core of federal buildings, and the comprehensive public park system.

In part to ensure the implementation of the McMillan Plan, the U.S. Congress established the National Capital Park Commission, the predecessor of today's National Capital Planning Commission, in 1924. Over the next several years, Congress expanded the Commission's original mandate, endowing it with responsibility for the "comprehensive, systematic, and continuous development of the park, parkway, and playground systems of the National Capital and its environs."

The 1952 passage of the National Capital Planning Act gave the Commission the name it bears today and established it as the central planning agency for the federal government in the National Capital Region, with its current form and functions.

Thanks to its tradition of planning, Washington D.C. is one of the world's finest urban achievements. NCPC carries on this legacy by creating and promoting a vision for the development of the District and the surrounding area. Our long-range conceptual plan, *Extending the Legacy: Planning America's Capital for the 21st Century* builds on the L'Enfant and McMillan legacies, charting a course for the nation's capital for the next 100 years.

...To Our Vision

The National Capital Planning Commission envisions a vibrant world capital that accommodates the needs of our federal government; enriches the lives of the region's residents, workers, and visitors; and embodies an urban form and character that reflect the enduring values of the American people.

IMAGE PLACEHOLDER

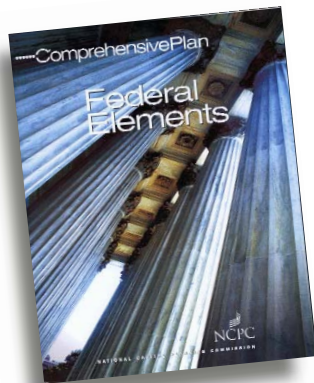
What Do We Want to Achieve?

Our Mission

The National Capital Planning Commission protects and enhances the extraordinary historical, cultural, and natural resources of the National Capital Region by crafting long-range plans, analyzing emergent planning issues, reviewing site development and building proposals, and monitoring federal capital investment.

Long-Range Planning

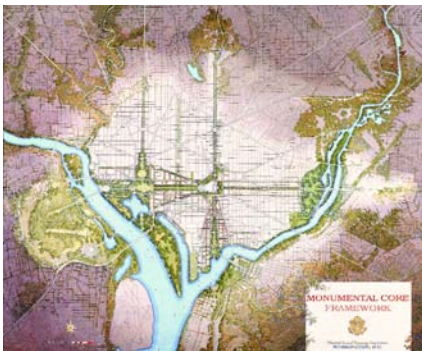
NCPC's long-range vision for the National Capital Region is articulated through *The Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements*, *Extending the Legacy: Planning for America's Capital in the 21st Century*, and the subsequent plans and projects that have advanced the ideas of the Legacy Plan.



The Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements outlines policies for seven distinct elements of capital city life in which the federal government has an interest. It addresses the needs of federal employees as well as visitors to the capital; devises policies for locating new federal facilities and maintaining existing ones; guides the placement of foreign missions and international agencies; promotes the preservation and improvement of the natural environment and public parks; protects historic and cultural resources, including the urban design features that contribute to the capital city's identity; and encourages efficient transportation into, out of, and around the National Capital Region.

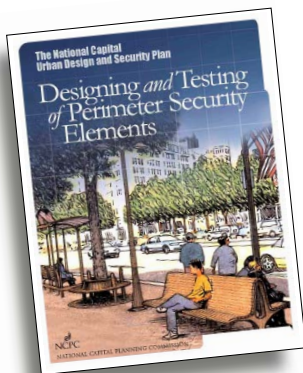
Separate District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan are developed under the auspices of the Mayor of the District of Columbia and subject to NCPC review prior to adoption by the District's City Council.

The Legacy Plan returns to L'Enfant's vision of the U.S. Capitol as the psychological center of the city, with public buildings and commemorative works providing an impetus to drive economic development outward into all quadrants of the city. The plan's other principal ideas include making the city's waterfront a vital part of public life; protecting the open spaces and historic resources of the Mall from development; and creating a comprehensive, flexible, and convenient transportation system.



Since the Legacy Plan's 1997 release, it has served as a touchstone for planning and development, inspiring policymakers and the public. Several descendant plans and studies have provided more detailed guidelines for specific components of the broader vision, including the *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*, the *RFK Stadium Site: Redevelopment Study*, and the *South Capitol Street Urban Design Study*.

Emergent Planning Issues



NCPC conducts research on a wide variety of emergent planning issues. When unsightly, *ad hoc* security structures started popping up around the capital city in the 1990s, NCPC took action by recommending approaches to security design that would restore the beauty and accessibility of the capital. And after catastrophic flooding occurred in the city's monumental core in 2006, NCPC responded with a report that determined the causes of flooding, identified necessary remedies, and outlined a series of implementation steps.

The reports, policies, and concept designs that result from the study of emergent planning issues help define and clarify the federal government's interest in these areas. They often form the basis of future planning initiatives and help establish priorities for updating the Comprehensive Plan.

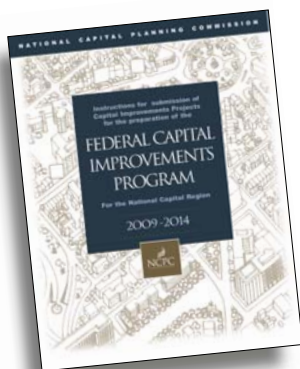
Plan and Project Review



The Commission reviews a wide range of plans and projects to determine whether they are consistent with the federal interest. In evaluating designs for site and building projects, NCPC's planners must consider the federal interest within the context of state and local laws; the policies and guidelines articulated in NCPC's Comprehensive and long-range vision plans; the plans and policies of local and regional planning authorities; the needs and master plans of the applicant agency; the concerns of other agencies; and public input.

NCPC staff members consult closely with submitting agencies to identify potential inconsistencies with the federal interest in order to resolve them before formal review by the Commission. Staff recommendations and public input inform the discussion of the commissioners, who vote on projects during their monthly meetings.

Capital Investment Review



Each year, NCPC prepares the Federal Capital Improvements Program (FCIP), which identifies capital projects proposed by federal agencies in the National Capital Region for the next six years. NCPC circulates the submitted proposals in draft form and solicits comments from affected local, regional, and state government agencies, private organizations, and interested individuals. NCPC evaluates each project to determine its consistency with the federal interest and local planning policies, identifying projects of potential concern and urging federal agencies to coordinate their activities with local planning authorities and citizen organizations.

The FCIP is the one document to which members of the public can turn for accurate and up-to-date information about the federal government's development plans in the region. Once the Commission adopts the program, the FCIP is given to the Office of Management and Budget to help prepare the President's annual budget. By providing the FCIP recommendations to OMB, NCPC helps set the federal government's development agenda for the National Capital Region.

The background of the page features a large, light green, semi-transparent seal of the National Capital Planning Commission. The seal is circular and contains various architectural and symbolic elements, including a central shield, a sunburst, and a compass. The text "NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION" is visible around the perimeter of the seal.

Our Strategic Goals

To carry out our mission and ensure that our nation's capital evolves as we have envisioned, we have formulated five strategic goals that will direct our planning efforts and critical support activities over the next six years:

- Goal 1: By crafting plans and policies that employ the highest standards of urban design and planning, the National Capital Planning Commission will define the federal government's interest in the long-term development of the National Capital Region.
- Goal 2: NCPC will review proposals subject to Commission approval or advice to determine whether they are consistent with the federal interest, and we will represent the federal interest on local and regional planning bodies.
- Goal 3: NCPC will inform the public of its activities, encourage citizens to become involved in the planning process, and participate in broader professional discussions at local, national, and international levels.
- Goal 4: NCPC will build consensus and facilitate cooperation among citizens, public interest groups, nongovernmental organizations, and governmental agencies to shepherd plans and policies toward fruition.
- Goal 5: To respond to the changing planning needs of the National Capital Region, NCPC will embrace the best practices for the continual development of its human resources, work processes, and technology.

Strategic Goal 1:

Develop plans and policies that define the federal government's interest in the National Capital Region.

Program Objective 1.A:

Ensure that the Comprehensive Plan is up-to-date.

Program Objective 1.B:

Identify emerging issues and develop policies, plans, and approaches to address them.

Program Objective 1.C:

Advance and maintain the Legacy Plan's long-range vision for the evolution of the National Capital Region.

Achieving Our Goals and Measuring Our Success

Strategic Goal 1:

By crafting plans and policies that employ the highest standards of urban design and planning, the National Capital Planning Commission will define the federal government's interest in the long-term development of the National Capital Region.

As the federal government's planning agency for the National Capital Region, NCPC defines the federal interest and articulates it through three mechanisms: the Comprehensive Plan, emergent issues planning, and signature planning that advances the Legacy Plan's long-range vision for the evolution of the National Capital Region.

Program Objective 1.A:

We will ensure that the Comprehensive Plan incorporates the most current data and addresses the key planning and policy issues of the federal government in the National Capital Region.

The Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements is updated periodically to respond to changing circumstances, the evolving priorities of the federal government, and the findings of studies undertaken by our agency and others. The most recent update of the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan occurred in 2004. Although the Comprehensive Plan should stay relatively stable over time to provide coherent long-range guidance, we intend to begin reviewing it at routine intervals, with the expectation that one element of the plan will be under revision at any given time.

We have already determined that the Parks and Open Space Element will be ready for updating by 2009. Upon completion of the joint federal/District CapitalSpace initiative, we will revise the Comprehensive Plan to reflect the research we have conducted for this project and incorporate its recommendations for action.

Over the last several years, many new policy priorities have emerged for which specific guidance is necessary. A new Urban Design Element will outline an approach to the overall design of the capital city to ensure that it is secure, environmentally sustainable, and possesses a unique aesthetic form that reflects the enduring values of our system of governance.

To improve our comprehensive planning program, we have adopted the following performance targets:

- 1.A-1 Starting in 2009, we will review the Comprehensive Plan every five years to identify elements in need of updating.
- 1.A-2 By 2010, we will update the Parks and Open Space Element.
- 1.A-3 By 2012, we will prepare an Urban Design Element using NCPC's research on sustainability, security design, building heights, views, and public spaces.

NCPC will identify emergent issues and develop policies, plans, and approaches to address them.

With the enactment of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, environmental sustainability has become a priority for the federal government. This affects many aspects of the federal planning interest, including transit development, the location of federal facilities, environmental preservation, and urban design.

The increasing use of flexible schedules, satellite work centers, and telecommuting is rapidly transforming the federal workplace. These changes, coupled with anticipated demographic shifts and changing procurement practices, have implications for patterns of regional development. We will explore this issue in greater depth, with the purpose of showing how the location of federal operations and facilities can be a catalyst for economic growth.

Other topics that NCPC has examined in the past are now ripe for further refinement and clarification. For example, although the 2002 *National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan* has been updated twice, there is now a need for a more detailed and comprehensive set of perimeter security policies that reflect the evolution of our experience and knowledge.

Responding to emergent planning issues has historically represented a significant portion of NCPC's activities, and this is likely to be the case in the future. The performance targets listed below encompass the key issues we expect to address over the next six years, with the awareness that others may arise:

- 1.B-1 By 2009, we will develop updated perimeter security policies for federal properties in Washington, D.C. that meet the government's security needs while protecting historic and symbolic public spaces.
- 1.B-2 By 2009, we will complete our analysis of the lasting value of the 1910 Height of Buildings Act in the context of its contributions to the city's urban design, development patterns, and view shed management.
- 1.B-3 By 2010, we will develop new architectural and urban design sustainability policies to ensure the application of the best environmental design practices to plan and project review.
- 1.B-4 By 2010, we will work with federal, regional, and local partners to evaluate the changing roles and needs of the federal establishment in the National Capital Region and determine how federal location decisions can become a catalyst for regional development.

Program Objective 1.C:

We will undertake planning initiatives that advance and maintain the Legacy Plan's long-range vision for the evolution of the National Capital Region.

The *National Capital Framework Plan*, the product of a partnership with the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, advances the Legacy vision by revitalizing areas adjacent to the National Mall; improving the integration of federal and local activities within the city; creating locations that are more appealing destinations for tourists, residents, and federal employees; and generating opportunities for economic development. Upon adoption of the Framework Plan, we will begin developing designs for several of the plan's priority sites.

CapitalSpace is a joint local/federal effort to preserve the city's parks and open spaces; ensure that they are accessible to residents throughout the city; make them amenable to changing recreational demands; and provide a strategy for their long-term management and development.

NCPC's 2001 initiative to advance the Legacy vision—*Memorials and Museums Master Plan*—has been updated since its release, and many of its recommendations have been implemented. However, new issues have arisen with commemorative works in the last several years, and this requires us to revisit the plan and address them.

To maintain and advance the Legacy vision, we have adopted the following targets:

- 1.C-1 By 2009, we will complete a plan and action agenda to guide the long-term development of the District's parks and open spaces (CapitalSpace).
- 1.C-2 By 2010, we will develop designs for roadway and streetscape improvements along 10th Street NW in connection with the *National Capital Framework Plan*.
- 1.C-3 By 2010, we will prepare recommendations for locating publicly accessible ground-floor amenities in secure federal office buildings.
- 1.C-4 By 2011, we will update the *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* with an analysis of federal commemoration in the National Capital Region; more detailed guidance on the placement of commemorative works, particularly in residential neighborhoods; and policies addressing commemorative works received from foreign countries.
- 1.C-5 By 2011, we will conduct a redevelopment feasibility study of 10th Street SW, including concept plan alternatives and urban design guidelines to coordinate improvement of this site with the Southwest waterfront redevelopment.
- 1.C-6 By 2011, we will prepare a plan for an interpretive culture walk to showcase the history, art, and architecture of the Federal Triangle and Pennsylvania Avenue.
- 1.C-7 By 2012, we will evaluate the feasibility of redirecting traffic from the Rock Creek Parkway to the Potomac Freeway to improve use of the waterfront.
- 1.C-8 By 2013, we will study the benefits and feasibility of constructing additional entrances to the Federal Triangle and Archives/Navy Memorial/Penn Quarter Metrorail stations to promote the recommendations of the Framework Plan.
- 1.C-9 By 2014, we will study the benefits and feasibility of constructing a new Metrorail station on East Potomac Park.



Strategic Goal 2:

Protect and represent the federal interest in the National Capital Region.

Program Objective 2.A:

Review monthly plan and project submissions.

Program Objective 2.B:

Analyze and recommend proposed capital improvement projects.

Program Objective 2.C:

Represent the federal interest on local and regional planning bodies.

Strategic Goal 2:

NCPC will review proposals subject to Commission approval or advice to determine whether they are consistent with the federal interest, and we will represent the federal interest on local and regional planning bodies.

Through its regulatory responsibilities, NCPC protects and represents the federal interest. The primary tools for carrying out these responsibilities include the monthly plan and project review process, the annual review of capital improvement projects, and representation on local and regional planning bodies.

Program Objective 2.A:

We will conduct timely, thorough, and transparent reviews of plan and project submissions.

The federal government's interest in the development of the National Capital Region encompasses many policy areas, and because the needs and priorities of any one agency may not align with those of another, NCPC must weigh the varying concerns to determine how to best serve the broader federal interest.

For example, securing our public buildings and monuments is an important federal interest, but so is maintaining the aesthetic quality of the capital city's architecture and public spaces. Building new facilities in locations that serve the needs of particular agencies is also in the federal interest, but so is preventing urban sprawl and increasing the use of public transit. The review of plans and proposals is a rigorous and systematic—though not boilerplate—process, and the assessment of the federal interest in any given situation is contingent upon many factors.

In evaluating designs for site and building projects, NCPC's planners must consider the federal interest within the context of state and local laws; the policies and guidelines articulated in NCPC's Comprehensive Plan and other long-range plans; the plans and policies of local and regional planning authorities; the needs and master plans of the applicant agency; the concerns of other agencies; and public input.

NCPC conducts timely, thorough, and transparent reviews of monthly plan and project submissions, but a few process improvements will help us use the agency's resources more efficiently and create a more predictable path for applicant agencies seeking Commission approval. To implement these changes, we have identified the following performance targets:

- 2.A-1 By 2009, we will describe the pre-submission consultation process more thoroughly on the agency's website and encourage earlier and more frequent consultations.
- 2.A-2 By 2009, we will develop a standard process for maintaining records of consultation meetings.
- 2.A-3 In 2010, we will conduct focus groups of applicant agencies and the public to reexamine submission guidelines and the plan review process.



Program Objective 2.B:

Through the review of capital improvement project proposals, we will provide annual recommendations of public works projects to assist OMB with budget preparation.

As part of the Federal Capital Improvements Program (FCIP), NCPC receives annual proposals from federal agencies for capital improvements to be carried out over the next six years. NCPC reviews these proposals, evaluates whether they are consistent with federal and local planning policies, and identifies priority projects in a report released every September. The FCIP is then given to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to help in the preparation of the President's annual budget.

To improve our analysis of capital improvements proposals and make the reported findings more useful for its readers, we have adopted the following performance targets:

- 2.B-1 By 2011, we will provide the FCIP as an on-line searchable document that allows readers to
 - a) sort proposals electronically by location, agency, estimated project cost, and other features; and
 - b) obtain facility information by selecting locations on a map.
- 2.B-2 By 2012, we will enhance the trend analysis in the FCIP to serve as an annual review of federal location, space use, and employment data.

Program Objective 2.C:

We will ensure that our representation in local and regional planning authorities protects the federal interest in the development of the National Capital Region.

NCPC is charged with representing the federal interest in various local and regional authorities such as the Board of Zoning Adjustment, the Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment, and the Transportation Planning Board of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. As one of NCPC's key statutory responsibilities, it is important to ensure that our external representation is fully integrated with the agency's other planning and plan review activities.

To improve our effectiveness in protecting the federal interest on local and regional planning boards, we have identified the following performance target:

- 2.C-1 By 2010, we will improve procedures for selecting NCPC's representatives to local and regional planning bodies, training them, and reviewing cases internally when they affect the federal interest.



Strategic Goal 3:

Inform the public, encourage involvement, and participate in professional discussions.

Program Objective 3.A:

Inform the public and encourage participation in the planning process.

Program Objective 3.B:

Participate in professional exchanges at local, national, and international levels.

Strategic Goal 3:

NCPC will inform the public of its activities, encourage citizens to become involved in the planning process, and participate in broader professional discussions at local, national, and international levels.

Communication is at the core of good planning. Planners need public input to ensure that their plans serve their intended beneficiaries, and people need accurate and timely information from planners to empower them in the decision-making process. Without popular support, even the most well-intentioned, farsighted plans may fail to take root.

Program Objective 3.A:

We will inform the public of NCPC's activities on a timely basis through both the mass media and direct contact, and we will encourage public participation in the planning process.

In Washington, D.C., "the public" has a very broad meaning, because the capital city must serve several distinct constituencies. The public includes local citizens, both those who are represented by organizations and those who are not. The public also encompasses federal employees who, as a group, comprise a distinct federal interest. And finally, the public also extends to take in citizens of the United States, for whom the capital city is the symbolic heart of the nation and an important travel destination.

NCPC already engages in a wide array of communications efforts, including maintaining relationships with the mass media and informing them of NCPC's activities; holding public meetings and outreach events; producing and distributing numerous print and electronic publications; and providing briefings and testimony to congressional staff and members.

Over the next six years, we will evaluate the effectiveness of our communications activities, and from this assessment, we will improve our ability to reach our various target audiences. We will also devote more effort to community outreach, with the goal of identifying new audiences and meeting with people in their neighborhoods.

We will begin reaching out to federal agencies that are not typically involved in planning or the plan review process to assess the needs of their employees directly and engage them in discussions about planning proposals that could affect them, such as the *National Capital Framework Plan's* proposed revitalization of Northwest and Southwest Rectangles.

Through these efforts, we can improve the quality of public input into the planning and plan review processes. To accomplish our objectives:

- 3.A-1 In 2009, we will review the effectiveness of our communications strategy through various methods, such as surveys.
- 3.A-2 Starting in 2009, for each major planning project, we will devise a public participation and outreach strategy that identifies target groups—emphasizing new populations and audiences—and the best methods to reach them.



- 3.A-3 We will supplement project-specific outreach with quarterly events on a broad array of NCPC activities, with the purpose of reaching out to citizens in their own communities.
- 3.A-4 We will meet with citizens and public interest groups to incorporate public comment into the plan and project review process.
- 3.A-5 By 2012, we will use the agency's web site as a tool to enable public participation.
- 3.A-6 We will meet with employees and leaders of federal agencies to discuss planning issues and the ways in which NCPC is addressing them.

Program Objective 3.B:

We will promote the participation of NCPC and its staff in professional exchanges.

By participating in the activities and discussions of the planning, architecture, and urban design professions, our staff can stay abreast of the latest theoretical developments and innovations in practice. Participation in local, national, and international exchanges will also enhance the agency's professional reputation, which can help broaden public support for our planning and policymaking.

NCPC staff members periodically attend the professional meetings of organizations like the American Planning Association, the American Society for Landscape Architecture, and the American Institute of Architects. These organizations likewise solicit our planners' participation in review panels for awards and other professional activities, and our peer agencies around the world seek out NCPC's advice on planning issues unique to capital cities.

Looking to the future, we have identified several opportunities for increasing NCPC's presence in professional exchanges to support our planning activities:

- 3.B-1 By 2009, we will strengthen relationships with the local academic community by expanding our outreach to additional faculties and promoting opportunities for student projects and internships.
- 3.B-2 Starting in 2009, we will host four events per year on general planning topics featuring NCPC staff or other local professionals as experts.
- 3.B-3 We will contribute to and benefit from the international body of knowledge on national capital planning issues.



Strategic Goal 4:

Build consensus and facilitate cooperation to shepherd plans and policies toward fruition.

Program Objective 4.A:

Improve the integration of federal and local planning interests.

Program Objective 4.B:

Develop solutions for infrastructure needs in the National Capital Region.

Strategic Goal 4:

NCPC will build consensus and facilitate cooperation among citizens, public interest groups, nongovernmental organizations, and governmental agencies to shepherd plans and policies toward fruition.

Every plan or policy has a lifecycle that starts with the identification of a need. The process of finding a solution moves through various stages, from the conceptual to the concrete, as ideas evolve into descriptions, drawings, and recommendations. A successful planning process does not end with the completion of a plan; it ends with the implementation of the plan.

NCPC does not provide the bricks and mortar to turn its plans into reality, but we do bring together, persuade, and encourage those who can make things happen. The National Capital Planning Act identifies NCPC as the agency through which all other federal entities responsible for public development in the National Capital Region must cooperate and correlate their efforts. Our coordination efforts go well beyond other federal agencies, however, and also include District agencies, public interest groups, and business associations, among others.

Although consensus-building is crucial during the implementation phase, it starts much earlier in the planning process, because a plan is more likely to become reality if all parties have been involved from the outset. NCPC therefore begins most major planning projects by convening advisory boards and steering committees of "stakeholders"—those groups likely to play an important role in marshalling popular support, passing necessary policies, crafting the project design, and providing funds.

Over the last several years, NCPC has played an important role in shepherding many of its ideas toward implementation, including the revitalization of South Capitol Street, the improvement of public transit with the Circulator bus, and the protection the National Mall by encouraging sponsors of commemorative works to seek alternative locations in and around the District.



Program Objective 4.A:

We will improve the integration of federal and local interests through increased coordination of planning and policymaking activities.

Through increased coordination of activities, NCPC can ensure that federal and local planning efforts dovetail as seamlessly as possible. We intend to increase the frequency of interaction among senior staff members of NCPC and local agencies, particularly the D.C. Office of Planning, to build "social capital"—the trust and goodwill that helps identify shared interests and work toward common goals.

To improve the coordination of local and federal planning, we have identified the following performance targets:

- 4.A-1 By 2009, we will work with partner agencies to coordinate recommendations of the *National Capital Framework Plan* with their construction improvement and long-range plans.
- 4.A-2 By 2011, we will prepare a master plan and implementation strategy with the D.C. Office of Planning and the District Department of Transportation to ensure that development within the North Capitol Street Corridor is consistent with the Legacy vision and the *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*.

Program Objective 4.B:

We will develop solutions for infrastructure needs in the National Capital Region by facilitating cooperation among relevant agencies and organizations.

Large-scale, complex infrastructure projects require action from numerous planning, policymaking, funding, and implementing entities. NCPC can help move plans toward realization by facilitating coordination among relevant agencies, developing post-plan action agendas, and ensuring that the process of moving from plan to implementation stays on track.

To meet the region's infrastructure needs, we have adopted the following performance targets:

- 4.B-1 By 2010, we will conclude our participation in the interagency effort to design and construct an interim solution for river flood control or determine whether to go directly to a permanent solution (the National Mall levee closure system).
- 4.B-2 By 2010, we will complete a report on action steps—models, studies, capital projects, and guidelines—to mitigate interior flooding in the monumental core.
- 4.B-3 By 2011, we will coordinate with federal and local authorities and utility companies to conduct an assessment of infrastructure needs in the monumental core to ensure that the future needs of federal facilities and operations can be met.



Strategic Goal 5:

Embrace best practices for development of human resources, work processes, and technology.

Program Objective 5.A:

Recruit, retain, and develop a highly skilled, motivated, and diverse workforce.

Program Objective 5.B:

Adopt work processes that increase efficiency, reduce costs, and ensure compliance with federal laws and guidelines.

Program Objective 5.C:

Establish and maintain a cohesive IT architecture.

Strategic Goal 5:

To respond to the changing planning needs of the National Capital Region, NCPC will embrace the best practices for the continual development of its human resources, work processes, and technology.

To remain a premier planning agency, NCPC must continue to invest in its human resources, technology, and work processes. Fulfilling all aspects of the agency's mission depends upon these crucial support mechanisms.

Program Objective 5.A:

We will recruit, retain, and develop a highly skilled, motivated, and diverse workforce that advances NCPC's mission and embraces its core values.

To ensure a high-quality staff and build morale within the agency, employees must have the skills and training they need, feel that they are being evaluated fairly, and perceive that their contribution to the agency's mission is valued. We also need to set clear performance standards, reward good performance, and, if necessary, correct poor performance.

To motivate and develop NCPC's staff we have identified the following performance targets:

- 5.A-1 By 2010, we will sponsor training sessions in green building and urban design practices.
- 5.A-2 By 2010, we will develop cross-division training procedures to ensure the availability of qualified planning personnel during periodic surges of demand in any of the agency's planning activities.
- 5.A-3 By the end of 2011, we will aim to increase the employee satisfaction rate by 50% above the previous level achieved in the 2008 Human Capital Survey.

Program Objective 5.B:

We will adopt work processes that increase efficiency, reduce costs, and ensure compliance with federal laws and guidelines.

Electronic records represent a growing share of the agency's documents, and we must ensure that NCPC has adequate processes in place to accommodate and archive them.

- 5.B-1 By 2009, we will develop standard formats for issues papers, executive director's recommendations (EDRs), and presentations to the Commission.
- 5.B-2 By 2011, we will improve submission and record-keeping processes by making all documents electronic and maintaining them in a central, searchable location.
- 5.B-3 We will develop electronic record archival procedures, submit them to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) for approval by 2009, and implement them by 2011.

Program Objective 5.C:

We will establish and maintain a cohesive IT architecture that supports NCPC's strategic goals and uses resources efficiently.

NCPC's technological infrastructure can be improved by simplifying its architecture and reducing the variety of hardware platforms and software applications. We will respond to the need for a flexible work environment by expanding the capacity for telework, and we will support the agency's planning functions by converting as many documents as possible into an electronic format and creating opportunities for on-line collaboration with entities outside of NCPC.

- 5.C-1 By 2010, we will provide sufficient remote access capacity to expand the possibility for telework to 20% of agency staff.
- 5.C-2 By 2010, we will modernize the agency's network file storage system so that 50% of the documents related to NCPC's plan review process are in electronic format.
- 5.C-3 By 2012, we will establish an Internet-based collaborative planning portal for on-line coordination with the Commission, external stakeholders, and interagency committees.

Key External Factors

Budgetary limitations and staff availability are the primary impediments that could prevent us from achieving our performance targets. These two factors are closely related, because NCPC's tighter budgets over the last several years have translated into a smaller workforce.

There are very few possibilities for reducing our workforce further without jeopardizing activities that are central to carrying out NCPC's mission. Because the agency's plan and project review workload continues unabated, maintaining a full complement of staff in this department is an agency priority.

Reduced staffing levels are therefore most likely to hinder our ability to plan for emergent issues, undertake significant revisions of the Federal Capital Improvements Program, expand the web site to increase public participation, conduct community and workplace outreach, and provide administrative and IT support.

Inadequate funding will have a direct effect upon NCPC's ability to obtain necessary training for its staff and participate in professional exchanges. It will also threaten our ability to upgrade the agency's computing and networking capabilities, upon which a whole host of other performance targets depend, particularly the conversion of all planning documents to electronic files and the ability to store them in a central, searchable location.

Many planning efforts, especially complex projects in which other federal or local agencies have a direct stake, require partners. Our achievement of performance targets that require the coordination of multiple entities is therefore contingent upon the working relationships among the partner agencies and whether they can fulfill their obligations.

An inability to obtain data—because it is too costly, does not exist in a usable format, or access is restricted for security or other reasons—could slow or prevent the research necessary for our policymaking projects.

Finally, it is possible that unforeseen events will reorder our current emerging-issue priorities, render some issues irrelevant, or create entirely new ones.

IMAGE PLACEHOLDER

Conclusion

With this Strategic Plan, the National Capital Planning Commission has laid out a set of goals to guide us over the next six years in fulfilling our mission as the federal planning agency for the National Capital Region. Through our principal activities of long-range and emergent-issues planning, the review of site and building proposals, and the analysis of capital improvement projects, we will continue to define and protect the federal government's interest in the development of the capital city and the surrounding area.

We are looking forward to updating our policies to reflect new priorities and best practices in perimeter security design, the management of parks and open spaces, architectural and urban design sustainability, and the placement of commemorative works. We will also advance the Legacy vision for the capital through a series of planning and design projects that integrate the federal and local activities of the city, create appealing destinations, and generate opportunities for economic development. We will also pursue new opportunities for public outreach and continue to improve our human resources, work processes, and technology.

Each year, we will revisit the Strategic Plan to assess our progress and to reaffirm our commitment to our vision, mission, and strategic goals. We will respond to changing circumstances by reconsidering the assumptions made in setting our goals, identifying unanticipated challenges and, if necessary, formulating new priorities.

In 2012, we will conduct a formal review of the Strategic Plan to determine if a fresh approach is required to ensure that our nation's capital remains a vibrant metropolis that accommodates the needs of our federal government, reflects the enduring values of the American people, and enriches the lives of the area's residents as well as those who visit from around the world.



Appendix: Statutory Framework

NCPC's efforts to define and protect the federal interest during the planning and plan-review process are guided by numerous statutes, including:

National Capital Planning Act

This Act, set forth at 40 U.S.C. Â§8701 et seq., establishes the National Capital Planning Commission as the central planning agency for the federal government in the National Capital Region. The Act provides for the agency's essential functions, including development of a Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital Region; review of federal and some District of Columbia proposed developments and projects; review of District of Columbia zoning amendments; annual review of the Federal Capital Improvements Program and the District of Columbia Capital Improvements Program; and under its general planning authority the development of special planning projects.

Height of Buildings Act of 1910

This law, enacted in 1910 as 36 Stat. 452, is key to establishing and assuring the horizontal character of the national capital by setting maximum building heights that are controlled primarily by street width. The height limit on residential streets is 90 feet. In business areas, the building height is generally limited to the width of the adjacent street plus 20 feet. There is an overall height limit in the District of 130 feet, which is extended to 160 feet along certain portions of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Commemorative Works Act

The Commemorative Works Act, found at 40 U.S.C. Â§8901 et seq., specifies the requirements for development, approval, and location of new memorials and monuments in the District of Columbia and its environs. The Act preserves the urban design legacy of the historic L'Enfant and McMillan Plans by protecting public open space and ensuring that future monuments and memorials in areas administered by the National Park Service and the General Services Administration are appropriately located and designed. The Act provides an important role for NCPC in approving the site and design of commemorative works. The Act, when amended in 2003, established a Reserve, a zone on the National Mall where new commemorative works may not be located.

District of Columbia Zoning Act

This law is set forth at D.C. Code Â§6-641.01 et seq. It authorizes the District of Columbia Zoning Commission to regulate the location, height, bulk, number of stories and size of buildings and other structures; lot occupancy; the sizes of open spaces; the density of population; and building and land uses. Federal buildings are exempt from zoning controls, but the Act mandates that NCPC serve on the D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment, which hears many cases involving land near or affected by federal landholdings.

Foreign Missions Act

The Foreign Missions Act, 22 U.S. C. Â§4301 et seq., reaffirms the federal government's jurisdiction over the operation of foreign missions and international organizations in the United States. The Act establishes the criteria and procedures by which foreign missions may locate in the District of Columbia. It provides for NCPC's executive director to serve as a member of the D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment when it considers applications by foreign missions.

International Center Act

This law, passed in 1968 and amended in 1982 (Section 1 of P.L. 90-553 (82 Stat. 958) and P.L. 97-186 (96 Stat. 101), authorizes the Secretary of State to sell or lease to foreign governments and international organizations federal property located within the International Center along Van Ness Street in Northwest Washington, D.C. Plans for all chanceries in the 47-acre International Center are subject to NCPC's approval.

National Historic Preservation Act

This law, at 16 U.S.C. Â§470, establishes a program for preserving historic properties throughout the nation. By carrying out its obligations under this law, NCPC serves as a steward of the region's historic buildings, districts, landscapes, and views.

National Environmental Policy Act

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. Â§4321 et seq., requires federal agencies to consider potential environmental impacts of federal actions. Under NEPA, NCPC must undertake an environmental review to inform its analysis of project proposals. Environment is broadly defined by the act to include social, economic, and historic impacts as well as effects on the natural environment. Beginning at an early point in its decision-making process, NCPC considers the environmental and historic aspects of proposed actions that it reviews.

District of Columbia Home Rule Act

The District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, known as the Home Rule Act, P.L. 93-198 (87 Stat. 774), and codified at D.C.Code Â§Â§1-101 et seq., made the mayor of the District of Columbia the chief planner for the city of Washington. As a result of the Home Rule Act, the District became responsible for its own planning, including social and economic development, land use, and housing and transportation policies. NCPC approves District projects in the central area of the city, reviews and advises on other District of Columbia projects and the District of Columbia elements of the Comprehensive Plan, and reviews and advises on amendments to city zoning regulations and maps.

Capper Cramton Act of 1930

The Capper Cramton Act, 46 Stat. 482, authorizes funding for the acquisition of lands in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia for the park and parkway system of the national capital. In the past, NCPC was charged with acquiring property for George Washington Memorial Parkway; stream valley parks in Maryland and Virginia; and the park, parkway, and playground system of the District of Columbia. The Act also requires that the development of the acquired land conforms to plans approved by NCPC.